



## Vegas PR News

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Welcome New Members

#### **PRSA Las Vegas Valley Chapter Reports Financial Strength**

The Board of Directors of the Las Vegas Valley Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America recently reviewed the financial health of the organization. **Pete Codella**, President, and **Shaun Sewell**, Vice-President of Finance, report that the chapter experienced 100% growth in the chapter's reserve funds in 2004 under the leadership of **Kirsten Cannon**, President, and **Lori Bachand**, Vice-President of Finance.

At the January board meeting, the Board endorsed a plan to strive for an investment goal of \$50,000 by the end of the 2010 fiscal year. \$50,000 in a reserve account would ensure continuous operation of the chapter in the event of a financial or other crisis.

Shaun Sewell, Vice-President of Finance, said, "The Board's ongoing conscientious financial stewardship ensures the chapter will remain vital and active now and in the future."

A finance committee is currently forming to examine investment strategies for the organization and make recommendations to the board for the achievement of the five-year goal. If you're interested in serving on the committee (no financial knowledge required!), please contact Shaun at [finance@prsalasvegas.com](mailto:finance@prsalasvegas.com).

#### **Western District Conference to help PR Pros Move from Information to Action**

With the advent of new communications technology, PR practitioners compete for valuable space in the public's consciousness. We must develop effective messages and methods to reach beyond the psychological and physical barriers between our organizations and our target audiences. However, publicity alone is woefully inadequate. How do we go beyond increasing awareness and drive audiences to action?

Whether we're trying to start, stop, or change a behavior, PR needs to do and be more in order to maintain relevance. Plan to join us at PRSA's Western District Conference on Friday, April 8, 2005 at the Stardust Hotel & Casino. We'll feature speakers who'll share their real-life experience from research through evaluation in great presentations, case studies, and panel discussions.

Complete program and registration information is now available online at [www.prsalasvegas.com/wdc.php](http://www.prsalasvegas.com/wdc.php).

#### **Calling all Vegas Experts**

Are you a PR practitioner for a Strip hotel? Do you publicize a popular show downtown? Do you simply patronize a great restaurant in your neighborhood? If so, we could use your story.

**Julie Engelhardt**, a freelance writer working for the travel Web site <http://www.iNeTours.com>, is putting together Web pages about Las Vegas. She is looking for contacts who can send information about everything "Vegas," from the Strip, to Downtown, to any other valley "gems."

If you have story ideas for Julie, you can send them to her at [jengelha@aol.com](mailto:jengelha@aol.com).

## **Luncheon Committee sets sights on 2005 programs**

Responding to suggestions gleaned from the recent member survey, the PRSA-Las Vegas Valley Chapter recently formed a Luncheon Committee to develop monthly topics that are relevant and educational for members and non-members alike.

“One thing we learned from those members who responded to the survey was that they desire more substance and less ‘fluff’ from the monthly luncheons,” said Luncheon Committee Chairman **Tom Bradley**. “So, the new committee is exploring topics that are both timely and informative, presented by speakers who can share their insights to benefit luncheon attendees.”

In addition to Bradley, committee members are **Melody Cannon**, PBS&J; **Jack Chappell**, Aston, Buxton & Chappell; **Diane Gibes**, Brown & Partners; **Sylke Neal-Finnegan**, APR, Golden Nugget-Las Vegas; and **Shaun Sewell**, UNLV Performing Arts Center.

The committee in January held the first of its monthly meetings to brainstorm luncheon ideas for the coming year.

## **Las Vegas Valley Chapter a Proud Supporter of the Champions for PRSSA**

The Champions for PRSSA (formerly the Friends of PRSSA) is an organization for public relations professionals who seek to better students' education in public relations. The chapter/members contribute funds on a yearly basis to support scholarship and award programs for students of PRSSA. For 15 years, the Champions have sponsored and solicited contributions to annual PRSSA scholarships for students excelling in academic studies, leadership, internships and service. To date, more than \$74,000 has been awarded to 55 students in 41 schools. Three scholarships - \$2,000, \$1,500 and \$750 – are presented annually, and a fourth scholarship awarded when funds permit.

The annual membership is \$50 and every dollar is used to support PRSSA. Our chapter would like to encourage as many members as possible to join as individuals. The tax-deductible \$50 membership fee for 2004-05 is payable to the PRSA Foundation, noted Champions for PRSSA, and should be mailed to **Jeneen Garcia**, PRSA director of education, 33 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038-5150. For further information, contact Jeneen at 212.460.1466, or visit the PRSSA Web site at [www.prssa.org/aboutchampions.asp](http://www.prssa.org/aboutchampions.asp).

For more information about Champions, you can contact any of the Co-chairs for Champions of PRSSA: **Betsy Plank**, APR, Fellow PRSA; **Judith Bogart**, APR, Fellow PRSA; **Gary McCormick**, APR; or **Kent Landers**.

## **Advocacy Alert: Follow-up Issue: Bush Administration Bows Out of FCC Broadcast Ownership Rules Appeal**

Shortly after creation of the PRSA Advocacy Advisory Board, it encountered a proposal from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to change broadcast media ownership regulations to make it easier for media conglomerates to expand their holdings of newspapers, television stations and radio outlets in a single market, as well as own up to three television stations in large markets like Los Angeles.

Based on consensus views from Society leaders around the country, the PRSA Advocacy Advisory Board launched an aggressive campaign to voice concerns to lawmakers, FCC members and other opinion makers that such a relaxing of ownership could ultimately hamper the free flow of diverse ideas in the media, restrict local news reporting and programming and discourage emergence of small, independent broadcast entities with diverse points of view.

On Jan. 27, 2005, the Bush administration revealed that it would abandon its U.S.

Supreme Court appeal of a lower court ruling that had temporarily halted implementation of the new FCC ownership regulations.

"This is a victory for our Advocacy initiative," said Michael Cherenon, APR, co-chair of the PRSA Advocacy Advisory Board. "Although we're not in any way claiming total responsibility, we know with certainty that, along with many others, the voice of PRSA was heard on this important issue."

Cherenon and co-chair Gerard F. Corbett, APR, Fellow PRSA, cautioned, however, that the administration's announcement does not put an end to the perennially controversial matter, but merely reduces the chances that the Supreme Court will hear the arguments on last year's FCC action, which was first delayed, then happened quickly without much public input. Some of the larger media companies indicate they still will press the court to uphold ownership rules more favorable to their interests. Published reports indicated the Bush administration dropped its appeal because it was concerned that the high court might elect to declare all ownership restrictions unconstitutional, which would pave the way for greater consolidation in local markets than even the FCC envisioned. Following the announced departure of Michael Powell, the current FCC chairman, a newly constituted FCC could take an altogether different approach.

"We're going to keep watching to see what happens," said Corbett. "Maintaining a free, open, diverse media should be a major concern for all public relations professionals."

#### **Questions? Comments? Issues?**

If you have any questions or comments regarding PRSA's Advocacy program or have an issue for consideration, please contact us at [advocacy@prsa.org](mailto:advocacy@prsa.org).

#### **The President's Report**

February 2005

We're off and running, and thanks to **Jeanne Corcoran**, with a better understanding of what the Nevada Film Office does for the Silver State. Kudos to **Tom Bradley** for organizing the **first luncheon of 2005 on Friday, Jan. 28**. Jeanne was able to share the joy with 42 PRSA members and friends.

Kudos are also due to the hard working **Western District Conference** team. They've put together a pretty amazing one-day professional development seminar slated for April 8 at the Stardust. It's been nearly 10 years since the Las Vegas Valley Chapter hosted the Western District Conference. If you haven't seen the information online, you ought to check it out at [prsalasvegas.com/wdc.php](http://prsalasvegas.com/wdc.php). The WDC committee is co-chaired by **Kirsten Cannon**, APR and **Roger Buehrer**, APR, Fellow PRSA, with additional committee members **Lori Bachand**, APR, **Regina Bacolas**, **Guy Campbell**, yours truly (**Pete Codella**), **Cheryl Persinger**, **Shaun Sewell**, and **Nancy Syzdek**, APR.

In other news, the **Pinnacle Awards online survey** was launched and received 27 responses to date. Watch for news of the date and place for this year's Pinnacle Awards slated for early November. This year we'll be reaching out to broaden our entry base and promote the awards for public relations best practices. Please contact **Paulette Mudrak** to participate on the Pinnacle Awards committee.

Also, a luncheon committee is now organized and those worker bees will be making all sorts of strides to make our lunches even more successful. Feel free to contact our president-elect, Tom Bradley, with any luncheon feedback or requests.

As you know, last year national launched a new APR exam and our accreditation chairs are working with a select group of guinea pigs who've stepped forward to be the chapter's first members to try out the new exam. Go get 'em!

Thank you to the board members and volunteers who give so freely of their time and talents to promote PRSA in Las Vegas. Your dedication and attention to detail are tremendous.

Have a great February!

~Pete Codella

President, PRSA – Las Vegas Valley Chapter

### **Welcome New Members**

The Las Vegas Valley Chapter welcomes two new members to the chapter this month:

Laura Olson, PR Manager, Aristocrat Technologies  
Stephanie Pocchia, Coordinator, Clark County School District

Not a member yet? Join in February and March and get "A Taste of PRSA."

During this special promotion, the national office is waiving the \$65 initiation fee. Also, new members will receive a \$20 voucher that can be applied to professional development programs or select gift items purchased directly from the national office. Some restrictions apply, and the promotion ends March 31.

Special membership applications are available at [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org) (download the PDF application for this offer). Questions? Please contact **Lori Bachand**, vice president of membership for the Las Vegas Valley Chapter, at [lori.bachand@ccmail.nevada.edu](mailto:lori.bachand@ccmail.nevada.edu).

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